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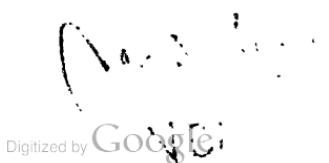
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HEART
LINES
BY
FRANK A.
VAN DENBURG

PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY

28 Ap 05



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J.
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HEART LINES

Frank Augustus BY
F. A. VAN DENBURG

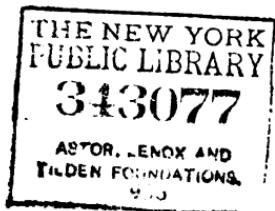


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O.F.

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TO MY MOTHER

Now passed to her reward, the best earthly friend and confidanté I ever knew, who shared in and encouraged my good ambitions, who guided my youthful footsteps in the paths of that virtue of which she was a powerful exemplar, whose blessing still rests with me as a halo over my head, and whose memory still lingers with me with an invigorating influence, is this volume of "Heart Lines" dedicated.

PREFACE

In presenting this my first volume of "Heart-Lines" to the public, I do so rather reluctantly, for I know that the throbs which come to one's heart when filled with an overwhelming emotion, cannot be fully realized by the reader in the lines which are presented for attention. But I trust you will bear with me when I say that these lines were written from the deeper feelings and impressions of my heart, and I trust they will reach the reader in the same spirit.

"Oh heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail from thy desire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire
'What is it makes me beat so low?'"

There are reveries which come to each of our hearts when alone. Sometimes they come from what we have heard which has impressed us, sometimes from what we have seen, and sometimes from our own meditations of things in our own heart, so that we can understand Jean Ingelow when she says:—

"When I do sit apart
And commune with my heart,
She brings me forth the treasures once my own;
Shows me a happy place
Where leaf-buds swelled apace,
And wasting rims of snow in sunlight shone."

If we will but meditate upon lofty thoughts when presented to us, they will lead us out of ourselves and into a higher plane of thinking, and we can truly say with Tennyson :—

"And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deep,
When one that loves but knows not, reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows."

With a full appreciation of all help received by me, I would acknowledge the aid in inspiration, theme and suggestion received from my friend and pastor, Rev. George Wood Anderson, (unknown to him) in writing some of these poems. This is especially so regarding "The Autumn of our Lives." I had been trying for three years to write this poem but seemed to lack the inspiration to complete it. My dormant energies were aroused by his lecture on "Autumn," new thoughts came to me, and with an energy which seemed irresistible, it was completed.

It may be that no great thoughts are expressed in this volume, that there is nothing which will lift the reader higher, that no one will receive comfort or cheer, but these lines will express my thought in publishing it :—

"Though all great deeds were proved but fables fine,
Though earth's old story could be told anew,
Though the sweet fashions loved of them that sue
Were empty as the ruined Delphian shrine—
Though God did never man, in words benign,
With sense of His great Fatherhood endue,—
Though the life immortal were a dream untrue,
And He that promised it were not divine—
Though soul, though spirit were not, and all hope
Reaching beyond the bourn, melted away;
Though virtue had no goal and good no scope,
But both were doomed to end with this our clay—
Though all these were not,—to the ungraced heir
Would this remain,—to live, as though they were."

Jean Ingelow.

That these lines will drag no one lower down if they do not lift them higher, is the earnest wish of the author

Frank A. Van Denburg.

Troy, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1904.

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WHAT MORE SHALL I GIVE TO THEE

A father is bending, filled with pride,
Over his dearly loved boy,
Thinking what more he can still provide
To add to his daily joy.
The boy tells his wants slowly,
For his father has been so good,
But the father says so lovingly
"Much more would I do if I could."

He has given his boy rich treasure,
More costly than silver or gold,
He has denied himself of pleasure
That joy to him might unfold;
He wants his boy to rise still higher,
Larger views of his life to see,
And he asks, just to know his desire,
"What more shall I give to thee?"

He could give his son with firm behest
That he accept of his proffer,
He could provide what he thought best
With no chance to refuse his offer,
But the wise father knows full well
In choice his son should take part,
His thoughts of life he must tell,
Make known the desires of his heart.

He knows success is a rich treasure,
Service being the integral part,
And success he can in no way measure
Unless he enters with his heart;
Therefore in whatever he shall provide
Which in his wisdom seemeth best,
He asks his son to cheerfully coincide
And the needs of his life request.

Just so with our loving Father above,
As He looks on us from on high,
Proud to think the works of His love
Were fashioned by His own eye;
He is ever anxious to freely bestow
Rich blessings, so full and free,
And He asks each child of His below
"What more shall I give to thee?"

Although He has opened His treasure
And given us His own dear Son,
Yet still He tells us, with pleasure,
His work for us is not yet done;
He would not leave us to fight alone,
'Mid trials and crosses to abide,
But to help us, would leave His throne,
Our weary footsteps would guide.

He would not work His great work alone
In one single human heart,
And while He rules on His great throne,
He wants us to do our part.
He could fashion our lives for each day
As an artist paints the flower,
And then He could make us rise and obey
By the force of His great power.

But our loving Father works not thus,
He will not lead us in that way,
For He has made free moral men of us
And gives choice to do as we may.
He will not force us in a certain path
To show His omnipotent power,
Nor force us to take the gifts He hath
And ~~longs~~ to send each hour.

He knows we are better if we only pray,
That good service is of the heart,
He wants us to tell our need each day,
In His works of grace to take part;
He knows our needs without our prayer
Better than we ourselves can know,
But He wants us to tell about our care
And thus better acquainted grow.

For each one He has great treasure,
Far more than we can ever dream;
There are heights we cannot measure,
And joys which heavenly seem.
He has ever been our very best friend,
Has given His best full and free,
And still He asks us in earnest trend
“What more shall I give to thee?”

His mercy is ever boundless and free,
Of His grace there is no waste,
He supplies our need whate'er it be,
When seeking we find with haste;
He gives to none a supply of grace ahead,
No decay and waste can we see,
He says, as He comes with noiseless tread,
“What more shall I give to thee?”

TO-MORROW WILL BE SUNDAY

The week has taken it's flight,
The toils have been heavy, we say,
But this is our Saturday night
And to-morrow will be Sunday.

The laborer wends his way home wearily,
But a peace and joy can he feel
As he greets his loved ones tenderly
And partakes of his simple meal.
"I am glad," says he, "this is Saturday night
And to-morrow will be our Sunday;
The toils of the week have not been light
But the rest will all labor repay."

The business man, too, has foes to fight,
The week has brought anxious fear,
And he greets with joy the Saturday night
For the Sunday of rest is so near.
He must lay aside the worry and strain,
Though it be for one brief day,
If from gain he cease, from care refrain,
The rest will all losses repay.

The rich and poor alike must toil,
Their backs with burdens are bent,
They must join the world's turmoil,
In it's strife spend and be spent;
To gain and sustain, they both must fight,
And both at their week's end can say:
"I'm really glad this is Saturday night,
To-morrow I'll rest for it is Sunday.

There are those to whom Saturday night
Brings never a thought of rest,
Whose Sunday vision brings only a sight
Of hunger and strife at the best.
The Sunday to them is a fearful dream
Of appetites and lusts holding sway,
They think not, in the day's last gleam,
That the morrow is their best day.

There are patient ones in many a place,
Wives with hearts rent in twain,
There are little ones with pinched face,
Whose very looks show their pain;
Their father's return home in the eventide
Has nothing of cheer to their ears,
Their dread of the morrow they cannot hide,
For their Sunday is full of fears.

Oh that we might go to homes sin fraught,
Might show them the path Christ trod,
That they might accept the message brought,
Their homes become temples for God;
Then shall the father and mother delight,
And the little ones laugh in glee,
As they joyfully think on Saturday night
That their Sunday shall happy be.

* * * * *

So may it be at the close of our life,
As we liken it to one week's space;
May our Saturday night bring no strife
When Sunday stares us in the face.
We have labored long, toiled with might,
Our life's week has seemed so bare,
But we are glad this is Saturday night
And to-morrow is our Sunday so fair.

Both joys and sorrows have been our part,
And perhaps an even balance would make ;
The death of friends has grieved our heart,
But their treachery caused it to break.
We fear not toil, nor sorrow, nor strife,
If life's week has been lived at best,
For this is the Saturday night of life
And to-morrow our long Sunday of rest.

Our week of life has taken it's flight,
It's burdens will soon be o'er,
For this is our life's Saturday night,
And our Sunday will last evermore.

THE CYCLONE AND THE TREE

A party of friends travelling through the west,
came into a section of country which had recently
suffered from a cyclone. Everything in it's path
seemed to have been swept away but one old giant
oak, which stood amid all the ruin with it's head
erect and not even a bend in it's giant frame.

All around us we see destruction,
For a cyclone has darkened the land,
And has left all in desolation
By the might of his merciless hand.

Here where once a forest stood,
Where we oft enjoyed it's shade,
Now the strong and mighty wood
In destruction and ruin is laid.

Here the farmer once proudly gazed
On his fields of ripening grain,
Now he is bewildered and all amazed
As he thinks of his loss and gain.

Here a neat little cottage once stood,
Sheltering mother, child and wife,
Now there is ruin and tangled wood,
All around us the marks of strife.

And here a church, where we so gladly raised
Our pæans of praise and adoration,
Now no glad bells greet us, no God is praised,
All about we see dire desolation.

But as we looked about on the tangled wood,
We saw, to our amazement, entirely alone,
A stately tree, of giant build, calmly stood,
Like some great monument made of stone.

Our hearts were filled with admiration
As with reverent desire we drew near,
For a tree is worthy of our commendation
That can face such a foe without fear.

As we cautiously nearer to it drew,
A plaintive sound, like words, we heard,
But an eagle from its branches flew
And we thought it came from the bird.

As we came near to show our respect,
It suddenly began to nod its head,
Then greeted us in our own dialect,
And the following is what it said:

"Long and many years ago, my friends,
I was planted by a boy long since dead;
Soon I grew upward, with very few bends,
And my roots below firmly fixed my bed.

Then my branches began to spread out,
My roots were driven much deeper down,
And my body grew to be firm and stout,
While my leaves formed my emerald crown.

Beneath my branches, tall and straight,
Lovers and friends both have met,
In sweetest trysting a while to wait
Till the western sun should set.

The widow has prayed beneath my boughs
For an only son who was far, far away,
That God would help him revere his vows,
Bless and keep him through each day.

One day, when all was beauteous without,
The Shepherd of God and his flock came,
To sing praises, cast away their doubt,
And to assemble themselves in His name.

I had heard reports many times before
Of folks living by faith and not sight,
And now I determined to hear even more
Of the way they lived honest and right.

The good man opened this wonderful Word,
And read from those pages so white
The tale of Daniel, the prophet, who heard,
And obeyed, and even dared do right.

He read of the dangers around him spread
If he dared the king's command disobey,
Of how he determined, to whatever it led,
He would refuse the king's meat each day.

He read of the Lord who with him did abide,
Who helped him conquer at last,
And stayed with him still, his way to guide,
Till his days of life were passed.

My soul was thrilled, my heart wildly beat,
As I saw what one with a purpose could do,
For I thought of my enemy's recent defeat,
Who still had plans for my life, as I knew.

And so I determined to stand firm and true,
No matter if others around me did fall,
Feeling sure that by the most he could do,
He could not take life, position and all.

In order then to have my plans all fitly laid
For my friend, the Cyclone's, fight,
My roots and I at once a solemn contract made
That each would bravely do his might.

It was not long when the very heavens roared
With the sound of our enemy's might;
But we knew that our bark was safely moored,
For we had assurance we were right.

Ere long the mighty Cyclone came again,
With his thunder, groan and boom,
With steeds galloping over the slain,
Scattering broadcast awful gloom.

We answered his shout with our merry song,
'We're not one bit afraid of you,
And although you boast you are very strong,
We'll brave the storms all through!'

As the Cyclone retreated for ammunition,
I thought best to be sure of my life
By giving an earnest word of admonition,
And befit me better for the strife.

So I softly called to my roots below,
'Can we safely stand the gale?'
And the answer came so sweet and low:
'Fear not, for we cannot fail.'

Again the mighty monarch onward came,
With whirl, roar, and boom,
Scattering broadcast works of shame,
His sovereign power to assume.

But still we both resolutely stood,
'Mid the enemy's shout of 'Go Down,'
Defying his power as best we could,
Knowing joy our efforts would crown.

With vigor the attack was renewed
Till brag and force were spent,
Then his ultimate loss he viewed
And to other lands quickly went.

So now I am standing here all alone,
Like Daniel, of whom the good man read,
Assured my daring deed will be known
Perhaps for many years after I am dead."

* * * * *

The voice had fainter and softer grown,
And spoke not but in a mournful wail,
For the loved companions who had flown,
To describe which, words would fail.

Tell me, is it any great wonder
We tarried there to hug that old tree?
And did we really make a blunder
In all the tree had told us to agree?

I wait not for an answer, friend,
For we saw so much commendable,
To have acted in any other trend
Would have been all impossible.

But can we not all a wise lesson learn
From the character of that old tree,
Which will help us evil deeds to spurn,
And for the right to stand firmly?

This life is like a tender little twig,
Which is growing, growing for eternity,
And whether it is growing small or big
Depends all on what our lives shall be.

We may grow with rapidity skyward
On a poorly constructed foundation,
But if our inward growth we retard,
We have no safe or sure formation.

But the fruit which each shall bear,
Whether joy or sadness, weal or woe,
We, by our lives, inevitably prepare,
As forward through this life we go.

The power of choice is given to every one,
And the kind of fruit is what we will,
For fruit shall come from work well done
And the purpose which our lives fulfill.

Then let us have our inmost souls engrafted
With the buds of LOVE, and TRUTH, and
GRACE,
Then—our Father's approbation shall be wafted,
No matter what trials we are called to face.

A GREAT ROCK IN A WEARY LAND

This life is like a dreary desert,
Filled with heat, and dust, and sand,
And often would we be in the dirt
If not upheld by His mighty hand.

Our caravan is marching onward,
And even through a narrow strand,
If our course is heavenward,
He is a Rock in a weary land.

Our weary feet do often stumble,
Our sandals sometimes do break,
Our ears are sick of the rumble,
Our bodies are tired of the shake.

But soon we can see an oasis,
To which we are led by His hand,
And we see towering o'er us,
A great Rock in a weary land.

We know 'tis the same Rock of Ages
Which was cleft once for you and I,
The Rock, which in all man's stages,
Has towered right o'er him on high.

Let us cling to this blest Guide,
Through the dirt, dust and sand ;
In the ever cool shade let us hide
Of a great Rock in a weary land.

A SMILE

A smile is a blessing rare
Which comes to each here below,
A perfume which fills the air,
And charms where'er it shall go.
It fills our souls with light
When burdens seem heavy to bear,
It makes our own lives bright,
It blesses and helps everywhere.

It casts its gleam far away,
Like the rays from a beacon light,
It serves in our stormy day
As the star to the mariner's sight.
It bids us rejoice in our sorrow,
Be brave in the midst of our fear,
It tells us the joys of to-morrow
Are sweetened by our good cheer.

If we smile when weary and pained,
Even though at a mighty cost,
We will find that we have gained
Energy which would have been lost.
Our lives may have sad and lonely grown
With sorrow that will not die,
But a loving smile to others shown,
Will lighten our load thereby.

Then think it not an idle thing
A pleasant smile to give,
For joy to others it may bring
When lives are hard to live.
There are many with burdens heavier
Than you or I must bear,
And if a smile will make them lighter,
Let its perfume fill the air.

When life's busy toil is over,
Its burdens and joys cast aside,
You may see what cares have been lifted
By the influence of your smile.
When the deeds of love are counted,
Their influence on others made plain,
You will see, to your utter amazement,
The gain from your one sweet smile.

HOME THOUGHTS

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”
Cowper.

I have passed so swiftly over the years,
Full of care and toil, laughter and tears,
But of all the thoughts of love and bliss,
The sweetest remembrance is Mother’s kiss.

I remember well my childhood days,
The old farm home, the span of bays,
Father and Mother, kind to every one,
Who smoothed my locks, calling me son.

They often said to me, “my little lad,
Strive to be kind and noble, never bad,”
Little thinking then how much strife
A boy must meet all through his life.

One day we saw they were growing old,
From summer’s heat and winter’s cold,
And one day we sat by the silent dead,
Then laid them to rest with bowed head.

No more do we live in the old farm home,
Where the cows and horses loved to roam
Through field and wood, to crop the grass,
Or to dream in the sunbeams as they pass.

Those times will never return again,
The girls are women, the boys are men ;
Some are married, have homes of their own,
In which childhood’s blessings are shown.

What cares we were they only knew,
Their trials and cares were not few,
But they were true, in word and deed,
Shared each sorrow, supplied each need.

We too will grow old, our locks turn gray,
And come to the River of Death some day,
But if God is with us, we need not dread,
For it is not death but life, Christ said.

Let us think of our loved on yon shore,
Where sorrow and pain can enter no more,
And try to help others, poor and weak,
Toward the Heaven which we all seek.

Then when our life's course is fully run,
As we look in the west to the setting sun,
We can listen and smile as the waves beat,
For they carry us where loved ones meet.

THE AUTUMN OF OUR LIVES

When Autumn comes to greet us,
Shading hill and valley fair,
With its golden glow of sunset,
With its red and purple rare,
Then, my friend, are we reminded,
As the bees are in their hives,
Of the time when we shall each be
In the Autumn of our lives.

Spring comes, nature awakes from slumber,
And rejoices that Winter is o'er;
Summer brings rich gems without number
On field, and hill and shore.
The cattle roaming o'er a thousand hills,
Browse and dream, happy and free;
The birds send out their sweetest songs,
As they flit from tree to tree.

The cricket sings in creaky words,
Telling that days are flying by,
The bluebird rears her pretty birds
And teaches them how to fly;
The robin wakes with the early dawn
To shout good cheer all around,
While the oriole builds its swinging nest,
And the humming bird is found.

The cowslip grows in meadows fair,
The bluebell greets our eye,
The roses shed their perfume rare,
The jessamine vines on high,
The buttercup and the daisy fair
In the green fields grow wild,
The morning glories greet our gaze
And raise their heads so mild.

But when the Autumn shall arrive,
With shades of brown, red and green,
Nature with activity is all alive,
Each shrub and tree at work is seen;
For the Winter will soon be upon them,
The snows will fall thick and fast,
And sad their fate if not ready then
For the dreadful chilling blast.

Each leaf into shape is gotten
For use when Spring comes in sight,
Then securely wrapped in cotton
And in a waterproof coat so tight.
It is carefully laid in its casket fine,
And is folded in exquisite peace,
To patiently wait through the long weeks,
Till Spring bids its vigil cease.

The gray squirrel sees in the hazy air
That Winter is approaching at last;
He may never have seen the snow so fair,
Or felt the storm's chilling blast;
But there is instinct in his little breast,
Placed there by his Maker divine,
Which tells him the Winter soon will come
And to work while he sees sunshine.

Therefore he builds him a snug little nest
To keep him from the blasts,
And he gathers of nuts the choicest and best,
To sustain while Winter lasts;
And when his storehouse is stocked full,
He toils not neither does weep,
But rests from his labor, throws away care,
And smiles as he cuddles to sleep.

So the Autumn will come to each below,
If we wish it, or fear, or sigh;
Our Spring and Summer days will go
And our Autumn days draw nigh.
We will look back the lane of our lives,
Perhaps with many a sigh and tear,
We will see in the fast fading glow of sun
That the Winter of death is near.

We may wish that our path had only led,
More in the steps of the Lowly One,
We may wish many kind words had been said,
Many deeds of love had been done;
We may seem unworthy to take a place
Among the Blood Washed Host,
And may wish we had one more chance
To redeem the days that are lost.

Our hearts may be rent with pain
As we think of opportunities gone by;
They pass only once, never again,
We cannot bring them back if we try.
If we improve them, they with us will abide
To bless us in the copious showers,
If we neglect them, they return not void,
Other lives are blest if not ours.

If the Spring and Summer have flown,
Bringing only a sigh or a frown,
Think not by brooding you can atone
Or gain one gem for your crown;
Think not in the rushing along of life
You can turn back a single day,
For what's past must always be past,
Till the shadows are flown away.

Then waste not your time in vain strife,
Or thinking of what might have been,
But seek to redeem in the future of life
What has been lost forever by sin.
Arouse from your sleep, stretch every nerve,
Be courageous, be brave, be strong,
And you may achieve mighty things still
Ere you join the countless throng.

Oh how very foolish it would seem
In the Autumn days of our life,
When Summer had cast its last gleam
And before we saw great strife,
To sleep and to idle precious time away,
With never a thought of our God,
Till we were reminded the end was near,
That our journey was nearly trod !

No; let us improve each swift passing day,
Fear not for the right to fight;
Let us work, let us watch, let us pray,
Let us keep our lamp burning bright,
So that when we are called to scenes above,
If at noonday, at morning or night,
We may smilingly answer our Lord's command,
And our faith be lost in sight.

Like a tired child rocked by mother's hand,
Contented and happy to rest,
May we leave the earth for a fairer land,
To dwell there forever blest.
As gently the zephyrs glide us along,
And the angelic music floats on our ear,
With a last sweet smile to our beloved,
May the Pearly Gates for us swing clear.

HEALING HANDS

There's healing in a mother's hand,
Though bent and crippled with age,
It seems to us, like a magic wand,
The pains of our life to assuage.

How oft does the child at play
Run to it's mother in haste,
And she drives the bruise away
With a simple touch, ungraced.

When the brow is aching with pain,
When the fever is at play,
Then the mother's cool hand lain
Soothes many a weary day.

When the eyes are forever closed,
And the heart it's workings cease,
By her hand the locks are smoothed
Ere they are laid away in peace.

When temptations and trials gathier,
And the danger is seen too late,
Then constant and true is the mother,
And loves though all others hate.

ULLABY

Sleep my little one, sleep and rest,
Mamma will hold you, dear,
Tenderly, lovingly, close to her breast,
So darling do not fear.
Close your eyes gently,
For all too hastily
Toil and care will be found.

A journey to slumberland softly take,
Gently, oh gently, away,
Wake when the morning shall gayly break
Of another glad new day.
Slumber so peacefully,
So calm and serenely,
Dream of things lovely and bright.

Rack not your little brain
With the cares of life,
Think not of your place to gain
In the world's busy strife.
Smiling so lovingly,
On all so tenderly,
Sleep in your innocence sublime.

Then rock you my little one,
Sleep now and rest,
Wake with the rising sun,
Happy and blest.
Trouble will soon annoy,
Sorrow as well as joy,
So sleep little one, sleep now and rest.

ODE TO MT. M'GREGOR

Sleep on, thou noble hill,
Rest on, silently and still;
Thou hast of service been
In sheltering once upon thy peak
One who was yet, so pale and weak,
One of the greatest of men.

He had willingly risked his life
To cut short his country's strife,
And to free his own fellowmen,
From the terrible slavery, sin,
And the bondage they were in,
Which was beastly and inhuman.

He had been the friend of Lincoln,
And was also a comrade of Sheridan,
He had written "no terms" at Ft. Donelson,
He had gained the day at Vicksburg,
Rejoiced—over victory at Gettysburg,
He had agreed to "hammer" with Sherman.

Thus so bravely and nobly he fought,
To his own safety gave no thought,
Save to unite and free downtrodden men;
When at last the bloody strife was o'er,
The fearful battle cry was heard no more,
He dealt with the enemy generous then.

When his trials and duties were nearly done,
And the course of his life had nearly run,
He was brought on thy brow a while to lie,
Till the last bugle sound drew near,
Of the foe on whom we look with fear,
And the summons came for him to go on high.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities come when least expected,
In a way we think least about,
They dress in a garb not familiar,
Their semblance may be in doubt.
By faithfully doing the trivial things,
The duties we see all around,
We may grasp the blessings as they fly,
And our place in life be found.

They cannot be bound for future use,
For they will cut assunder the thong,
We cannot tell how they got away
When the binding seemed so strong.
There is no use to try to trace them,
No bloodhounds can find their track;
No mighty army can make them prisoners,
No power can bring them back.

They present themselves to us but once,
And never pass our way again;
We may watch and long for their return,
But we watch and long in vain.
If you would have them be your guest,
You cannot use them well,
But grasp them, harness them securely,
In slavery make them dwell.

Then shall they do your bidding,
They will work at your command,
They will carry your heavy burdens
With a strong and willing hand.
They will carry you over mountains,
They will take you over the plain,
They will sail you across the ocean,
And return you safe home again.

Wait not for a convenient season
When your soul shall have better grown,
For when that season cometh,
You will find your opportunity flown.
Trust not in your last fleeting breath
To gain an immortal crown,
But grasp the opportunities as they come,
And you shall win renown.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

The wise men, guided by a star,
Came in the early morn,
To the little town of Bethlehem,
Where our Christ was born.

They found Him in a manger bare,
No pomp or vain display,
But with the lonely cattle there,
In swaddling clothes He lay.

No kings to herald near and far
That Christ the Lord was come,
But the wise men, guided by a star,
Came to his humble manger home.

They brought to Him treasures rare,
Of frankincense, myrrh and gold,
And worshipped in that cattle lair,
Their Saviour long foretold.

They doubted not it was the one
Whom they had sought in vain,
They believed this lowly little son
Was the Messiah come to reign.

The shepherds abiding in the field,
Keeping watch over flocks by night,
Heard the news from Heaven pealed
And sought to see the wondrous sight.

When they had seen this Holy Child,
Asleep on His pillow of hay,
The hills and valleys, bleak and wild,
Rang with their sweetest lay.

They joined the glad celestial song
Which the angels sang in tune,
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men,"
"Praise to our God triune."

No more will shepherds see that star,
And hail to the new born King,
No more will wise men from afar,
Their gifts to Bethlehem bring.

For He has come, the promised One,
To save the world from sin;
He was God's only begotten Son,
Sent to be the Saviour of men.

He left His Father's throne above,
To seek and save us one and all,
And to show us His wondrous love,
He was born in a manger stall.

While He will come no more to earth,
To be born in so lowly a way,
Still He may come in a grander birth
In each of our lives this day.

We may not see His blessed human face,
His form we may not tell,
But He wants us for an abiding place,
In us He deigns to dwell.

So on this gladsome Christmas time,
May He dwell in every home,
May there be rejoicing in every clime
That Christ the Lord is come.

A NEW THOUGHT

Who can describe a new thought,
Who can tell it's mighty power,
Who can say God inspired it not,
To come like an opening flower?

Neither prophet, nor seer, nor sage,
Nor the wise men from afar,
Can tell why it comes to man below,
Like an ever guiding star.

As the hart for the waterbrook panteth,
When thirsty and water is sought,
So the heart of mortal man ever longeth
For the blessings of a new thought.

For this he will strive day and night,
For this he will search far and near,
For this he will sacrifice his health,
For this will even die without fear.

When at last a new thought is found,
He gathers it snug to his breast;
He is thrilled with a mighty emotion,
His soul is overjoyed and blest.

He hugs it closer and closer still,
For fear it will flee away;
He drinks in it's very life blood,
He guards it through the day.

Like one who has lost a treasure,
Has searched for it far and wide,
Till at last his search is rewarded,
And the treasure is by his side.

His very being is enthused,
As he clasps the prize long sought;
He thinks not of his vigil,
So wrapped is he in a new thought.

But when the new thought is mastered,
It's secrets are all made plain,
He hoards not for his own pleasure,
But freely distributes his gain.

Though he has spent years in study,
Of weary days and sleepless nights,
It has been for the sake of humanity,
That others might reach his heights.

DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR

Toll the bell softly, gently and low,
For the Old Year is dying to-night;
And who is not grieved to see him go,
Or sad as he breathes out his life?
Old age has crept slowly but surely on him,
As a thief in the stillness of night,
But such fond memories with him are linked
That we weep as he passes from sight.

A few more faint and feeble throbs,
Of that heart so brave and strong,
A few more moaning and gasping sobs,
And the Old Year forever has gone.
We tremble and quake as he passes away,
And memories with us are rife,
For we know that his death will mark
Another milestone in our life.

But he is decrepit and his life nigh spent,
His steps have been feeble of late,
He has served us well as we came and went,
And now the time has come to depart.
He reluctantly lays his burdens down,
For his work seems so incomplete,
There is much more he promised to do
But his days have been so fleet.

When we first met him one year ago
We hailed him with delight,
For we thought our paths would lead
Where all things were bright.
As the weeks and months have gone by,
We have found both bitter and sweet,
But we know well with all of the one,
Our lives would be far from complete.

No faint endeavor with time is found
For it is ever rushing along,
And already we hear the mystic sound
Of the boatman drawing nigh;
Swiftly he glides along, with not a word,
Over the troubled waves of life,
He steers his bark near Old Year's door
To carry him away from strife.

He softly raps at the Old Year's gate
And bids him be ready to go;
Though the night is dark, the hour late,
All around is a heavenly glow.
As we list to the sound so gently made
By the dip of their golden oar,
Our tears are dried by a shout of joy
As the New Year raps at the door.

NEW YEAR BELLS

Ring out ye bells, ye New Year bells,
Peal out notes of joy to-day;
Let your silvery tones fill every nook,
Send forth your sweetest lay,
For this very day has there been born
A New Year, fresh and bright,
Then merrily chime ye New Year bells,
Ring out with all your might!

The Old Year is with the silent throng,
He has passed forever away;
The New Year comes with smiling face
And bids us be glad to-day.
Before us the book is opened again,
With its pages snowy white,
To us once more a chance is given
To keep them thus so bright.

Let us sing aloud our gladness then,
Let us extend to all good cheer,
Let our good wishes be so free
That they cover far and near.
Let us strive to keep the pages white,
As they are this glad New Year's day,
By our daily endeavor to do and to be
As we would be at the end of the way.

The Old Year has gone forever,
We saw him breathe his last;
We cannot live over a single day,
Undo one deed that is past.
No good will it bring to heart or soul
To think of our fond hopes slain,
The Old Year is past as a tale once told
And will never pass our way again.

Before us a future lies trembling
Of a New Year, with paths not trod,
And it may be ere it's way closes
We will be called to meet our God.
To be sure it may bring toil and sorrow,
It's lessons may cause us much pain,
But fret not over the ills of to-morrow,
For with them comes grace to sustain.

Then ring out ye glad New Year bells,
Let merriment fill the air,
Let old time festivities be all around
And rejoicing be everywhere;
For another year we commence to live,
Other chances for victory are near,
So let us scatter abroad kind greetings
By our joyous "Happy New Year!"

**"But in my spirit will I dwell,
And dream my dream, and hold it true,
For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
I cannot think the thing farewell."**

Tennyson.

